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## GERMAN GASTRONOMY.

The middle classes in England were, some time ago, making a great fuss about the hardship of simple cookery, the misfortune of being condemned to eat perennial roast-beef, and sempiternal boiled chickens. I just wish the malcontents were set down with their families in a town of Southern Germany, and consigned to the tender, or rather the tough mercies of a *Köchin* of the Vaterland. To say that the German meat is bad, and the cooking simply abominable, is greatly to understate the case. On our first arrival at Hohenbraten, we had our meals at a first-rate café, and then the worst we had to contend with was a somewhat exaggerated version of Sir Francis Head's most correct formula of German cookery: 'Every dish that is not sour is greasy, and every dish that is not greasy is sour.' I think we found the dishes at the café pretty generally to combine both attributes.

But, especially where there is a family to be fed, one cannot be perpetually going out of doors for one's dinner; so, as soon as we were provided with what her advertisement in the *Tageblatt* described as a 'brave solid maiden, that all cooking, ironing, and household business good could do,' we resolved to have our dinner prepared, as a school-boy of the party expressed it, 'on our own hook.' Alas! that, as we soon found, was a hook on which hung beef tougher than the soles of our stoutest shoes, and mutton resembling nothing in this world so much as a compound of glue and fiddle-strings. I could not imagine how they contrived to have the beef so very, very tough and coarse of fibre, until I discovered that oxen, being universally employed in the district as beasts of burden, the economical farmers use them as such until quite superannuated and past their labour, and when that consummation arrives, they convert them into beef. As to the sheep, they are reared chiefly for their wool, and when shorn, are turned adrift, poor things, to stand in stony, grass-denuded fields, until the butcher's knife releases them from the pangs of a lingering death by inanition, and sends them in the form of *Hammelfleisch* to inflict dyspeptic horrors on the good folks of Hohenbraten. This, however, applies only to the English residents, who, accustomed to the tender, succulent, and wholesome mutton of the British Isles, will scarcely condescend to apply that name to the dreadful stuff which is all they can get in its place in Southern Germany. As to the natives, they seem to have a forty-ostrich-power of assimilation and digestion. In the cherry season, when the finest kinds of that fruit cost at Hohenbraten only a penny

a pound, the consumption by all classes is, of course, enormous, and I often wondered what became of the stones, scarcely a stray one being visible on the otherwise littered pavement. It was as puzzling a problem as that which has often been propounded, and never, so far as I know, satisfactorily solved, 'What becomes of all the lost pins?' However, touching the cherry-stones, I ascertained that the Germans invariably swallow them, as they also do gooseberry-skins, and the seeds and skins of grapes. As to paring an apple or a pear, the Vaterland would no more think of doing it than of using a sugar-tongs or salt-spoon. If in any geological revolution of the globe, the South Germans should ever in the remote future obtain a sea-coast, and with it the best things connected with the ocean—namely, oysters, cockles, crabs, and lobsters—I am quite convinced they would swallow not only the crustacea, but their shells too.

'Why does not the *gnädige Frau* order *sauer kraut* for dinner?' said my *Köchin* one day.

'Oh,' I replied, 'we English don't like it.'

'But,' was the rejoinder, 'it is so delicious, so delicate.'

This old cook, by the way, is a character. She came to me with a strong recommendation from the Graf von Blank, in whose house she had lived for five years, and who ranks among the highest aristocracy of the kingdom. I felt rather afraid of introducing such a functionary into my quiet unpretending household; but as the wages she asked were very moderate—not quite £5 British per annum—and as she undertook to do everything, literally to become a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, I thought there would be no harm in giving her a trial. The first morning that she made her *début* with the preparation of breakfast, she was not intending to lay a cloth at all; and when I suggested her doing so, as a usual preliminary to the morning-meal, she complied, but with great astonishment. Leaving the room, she presently reappeared with three cups standing on plates—no saucers—one knife, and one spoon, which she regarded as a full and sufficient provision for four persons. Similar table-arrangements actually prevail amongst even those of the higher classes of the South Germans; two or three grown persons, or any amount of children, eating off one plate, and drinking from one cup. Our popular prejudice in favour of each individual having his own proper table utensil is regarded as merely an evidence of British pride and selfishness. However, the cloth was at length laid, and the difficult attainment of really boiling water achieved; that precious fluid making its appearance in a fat clumsy kettle with an apoplectic spout, which resignedly took up its position on the top of a little round

black stand, serving as a haven of refuge for a tiny spirit-lamp. With the aid of the pure delicious bread which is nowhere better than in Hohenbraten, sweet fresh butter, and excellent tea from Frankfurt, breakfast was really a satisfactory meal, not to mention that it was accompanied by a plate of such sliced sausage as can never be had out of the Vaterland, where truly, one would imagine, that these fat round triumphs of gastronomy, varying in size from the diameter of a cigar to that of a cannon-ball, are indigenous to the soil, or that, as an old gardener at Killarney said of the arbutus trees, 'they were planted promiscuous, and grows spontaneous.' The morning-meal being ended at the primitive hour of half-past seven, the real tug of war begun—the dinner-ordinary cares of life, as poor Mrs Hemans called them. Dinner at Hohenbraten is literally *Mittagessen* (mid-day eating), for that important epoch of the day occurs for every one between the hours of twelve and two. Dining at any later time is regarded as quite a dissipated and ultra-fashionable proceeding. All the public places and schools, with many of the shops, are closed during these two hours; and, in short, appetite or no appetite, you soon come to feel that when in Hohenbraten, you must do as Hohenbraten does. People talk metaphorically of oiling or greasing the wheels of life, in order to make them revolve smoothly; I am sure, if a similar process could have made prandial things pleasant, for us it was by no means wanting. 'Spare the grease-pot, and spoil the dinner,' is the fundamental maxim of a German cook. Hannibal is said to have softened real rocks with real vinegar. Rocks I can believe in; but if we were told that he had by a similar process subdued Hohenbraten beef to melting tenderness, I should take leave to doubt the assertion. His gigantic cruet—and it must have been a huge one—would, I'll be bound to say, have utterly failed to produce any impression on the mass of tough fibre called, by Hohenbraten courtesy, beef. But to return from Carthage to a German kitchen, from Hannibal to Regina Vollmer. I had had such woeful dyspeptic experience of my former cooks' dinners, that I thought, with the new *artiste*, I would try a tentative course of tactics.

'What have you been most in the habit of cooking?' I inquired.

'I don't know what the gnädige Frau likes to eat,' was the evasive reply.

'Well,' I said, 'just tell me what sort of dinners you were in the habit of sending up to the graf and his family.'

'Oh, they lived well, very well indeed; first, there was always *Suppe* and *Ochsenfleisch*, with *Beilagen* and *Gemüse*.'

Now, I knew well enough the meaning of these delicious viands. For a family of six or eight, a pound or so of tough coarse beef is well boiled in an ocean of water, which, with the addition of a little farinaceous matter or chopped fennel, forms the *Suppe*. The scrap of beef, then, with—as an Irish cook would say—'the soul and body boiled out of it,' is served up with radishes, tongue-grass, bits of gristle chopped fine, white of egg, mustard, and currant-jam; all which delicate condiments I have seen consumed to the last bit, although the whole formed a *plat* which no British cat, who had a proper sense of feline dignity, would touch with her whisker.

'Well,' I said, 'and what else?'

'Generally, a plate of *Wurst* [sausage]; sometimes, but not often, a small bit of *Braten* [roast-meat], and an *Auflauf* [a sort of thick coarse pancake]. And so ended the dinner of a Hohenbraten nobleman.

I tried to superinduce some improvements on the aristocratic bill of fare, but, I am bound to acknowledge, with very indifferent success. I took care that on our table there should be no stint of *Braten*, such as it was; and I succeeded in obtaining some excellent

mealy potatoes. But to my surprise, my Regina, queenly in her scorn of British cookery, was very ill pleased.

'Dry potatoes,' she said, 'no Christian could eat; they should be allowed to grow cold, and then sliced in plenty of oil and vinegar, when they would be delicious. For this purpose,' she added, 'wet potatoes are much better than mealy ones, for they require less oil.'

In short, I had to make a compromise; to allow my Köchin to feed after her own fashion, and to try to induce her in return to aid and abet me in my fantastic cookery. I remember civilly requesting one of her predecessors to boil some carrots and turnips simply in water, instead of stewing them in grease. 'No,' she replied, very decidedly; 'she had always been accustomed to cook for Christians, not for cows and horses; and it was only animals of that description that would eat vegetables boiled in water.'

I have a good deal more to say of German cookery, especially as regards the great sausage-question; but I feel too much unfeigned respect for the mighty and unctuous Wurst to introduce an essay upon it at the end of an article; besides, certain sounds from the culinary regions warn me that I must wipe my pen, and go hold an argument with Regina on the subject of an hour's cooking over a furious fire being too much for a thin beef-steak. Nevertheless, something must be said of the Sausage.

Bacon, in the sense in which we understand it, is a viand unknown to the South Germans. They eat pork either fresh or slightly salted, with sauer kraut and a sort of fragmentary pancake; and for the lard and fat, their unctuous cuisine finds abundant employment. Now, it is a general rule that English people, when at home, grumble at their country, and when abroad, grumble for it, and regret its various comforts and advantages. Amongst the sentimental causes of the home-sickness prevalent amongst the British sojourners in Hohenbraten, may be ranked as most prominent a maternal longing for toasted bacon; and at length we found a remedy. A pork-butcher, named Herr Aichele, had lived for some years in England, and had there acquired the art of curing bacon; he was also versed in the English language, but after a certain remarkable and eccentric fashion; for example, instead of the generic word 'bacon,' he always chose to employ, in an adjective sense, a specific term scarcely to be named to ears polite; however, as his written bills ran thus, 'To so many pounds *belle* pork,' we ladies agreed to take the word in the French sense, and ignoring its English signification, to 'render the lard' as 'beautiful pork.'

It happened lately that I bespoke two hams from Herr Aichele, and requested him to let me know when they were ready; so one morning I received, written in pencil on a tiny discoloured scrap of paper, the following missive: 'I got two were nixe Leg of Pork for you kome daun this afternoon if yo please.—L. AICHELE.' Soon afterwards came a second epistle, which I copy verbatim: 'Miss my Chaps hongs theme Legs in the yard and the Kate kame on it, the dit hong theme to low, the are quite shoilet, i most presendle two another one.—L. AICHELE.' So I await in anxious literary and gastronomical expectation a third epistle from my porcine friend.

A favourite delicacy amongst the South Germans is a *Zwiebel Kuchen*, which, in virtue of my Irish birth, I may be perhaps permitted to describe as a fruit-tart made of boiled onions! A coarse, greasy, odorous dainty it is, and therefore highly relished by the gross-feeding Schwabs. How is it, in the name of Parnassus, that poetry contrives to flourish amongst them? Their dreadful habit of promiscuous expectation, in which 'I expect they flog America,' would, one might suppose, be sufficient to send not only the Graces but the Muses flying from the

land. Yet, not to speak of modern and living examples, Schiller was a Schwab, as indeed I have good reason to know; for, during the last month, he and all his belongings, both mundane and ethereal, were dinned into our ears, and paraded before our eyes, until the very name of Schiller became a word of fear. Even the palate was appealed to, cookery made subservient to poetry. Schiller wine, Schiller soup, Schiller bread, and Schiller sausages were consumed; Schiller tobacco was smoked out of Schiller pipes; Schiller garments of all kinds were worn; and even the chimney-sweeps carried a Schiller ladder, and swept your stove-flues with a Schiller brush. In fact, I came at length to the conclusion, that every line the great master had written clearly resolved itself into a 'Song of the Bell'—a sort of German Great Tom or Big Ben, dinnning our luckless British ears until they well-nigh cracked. The South Germans have a characteristic saying, when they want to express intense liking for anything, no matter whether it be an object of sense or of soul—'O das ist mir Wurst!' (Oh, it is sausage to me.) Sometimes the application is sufficiently absurd, as when an enthusiastic young Schwab was asked lately: 'Do you love Schiller's poetry?' 'O freilich,' was the energetic answer, 'it is sausage to me!'

#### MEDIEVAL LIFE IN LONDON.

THE history of medieval England is yet unwritten. The chroniclers of the chivalric age were too much occupied with the conflicts for supremacy between the regal, baronial, and ecclesiastical powers of the realm, too intent upon recounting the doughty deeds of valorous knights, to bestow much attention upon what to us moderns is of at least equal interest—the condition of the people. If we seek for information as to the social life of our forefathers in the days of Cressy and Poitiers, we must dig it from the seemingly arid soil of ancient statutes, rolls, charters, registers, and doomsday-books.

In these hitherto neglected but invaluable records, the archives of Guildhall are peculiarly rich, and, thanks to the Master of the Rolls, the first step has been taken towards making their contents available, by the publication of the *Liber Albus*. The White Book is a compilation of civic enactments, ordinances, and regulations made in 1419, under the direction of the then Common Clerk, Master John Carpenter, a citizen of note, one of Whittington's executors, member of parliament for the city, and the founder of the City of London School. This compilation is written in Latin and Anglo-French, and extends from the reign of Edward I. to that of Richard II.; a period of more than a century, but during which so little change took place in national usages, that the records of the First Edward apply equally to the days of the Third. There is scarcely a phase of the national life on which the pages of the White Book do not throw light, and from them we may draw a pretty correct idea of life in London under the early Plantagenets.

The metropolis stood at that time in much closer relation to the court than at the present day. The king and the corporation were in constant communication. The chief magistrate of the city held a position equivalent to that still awarded him by trans-channel dramatists. We find it recorded that bad language in the mayor's presence, and cursing his lordship in his absence, were punished with imprisonment; while the pillory was the reward of one 'for telling lies about William Walworth.' This same Walworth was not a man to be trifled with. The king being out of town during his mayoralty, he took upon himself to behead two men for contumacious conduct, for which boldness his majesty Richard II. sent him his royal thanks, a circumstance probably remembered

by the ready magistrate at a certain monster meeting in Smithfield. The citizens possessed several privileges; among others, immunity from having the royal household billeted upon them. In Edward II.'s reign, that monarch's secretary, with his sergeants, men, and horses, took possession of the house of the sheriff, John de Caustone. The latter incontinently turned out all the king's horses and all the king's men. It was afterwards enacted that killing one of the royal household who attempted to take forcible possession of a citizen's domicile, was no murder, provided the killer and six of his kinsmen took oath that it was upon that account only he had been slain. Determined as the civic authorities might shew themselves in defending their rights, they were none the less arbitrary in their rule over their fellow-citizens. In those good old times, the life of a freeman of London was a perpetual dancing in fetters.

The houses of ancient London were built entirely of wood, thatched with straw, stubble, or reeds—a formation sufficient to account for the non-existence of insurance offices. In the reign of Richard I., Fitzalwyne, the first mayor of London, issued a code of regulations for the building of houses, which code continued in force during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Under 'Fitzalwyne's Assize,' houses were built with party-walls of freestone, sixteen feet high, and three feet thick. From the top of the party-wall, the wooden framework of the roof ran up to a point, the gable being towards the street, plastered, and sometimes whitewashed; the roof was of tile, lead, or stone, from which gutters were laid along the wall, to carry off the rain into the street-kennels. The upper room was called the 'solar;' the joists supporting its floor being inserted at the height of eight feet from the ground. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, houses of two and three stories were built, each story often being a distinct freehold, a system productive of endless disputes and litigation. The shops were merely open rooms on the ground-floor, with large windows; stalls used for the sale of goods were limited to two and a half feet in depth; but pent-houses, or stalls on a larger scale, were made nine feet high, to allow horsemen to pass under them: these, if once fastened to the framework of the house, either by iron nails or wooden pegs, became part and parcel of the freehold. Chimneys came into general use about 1300, before which the smoke escaped as best it could. Oven or furnace flues, if placed near lath-work, boards, or wooden partitions, were removed by the scavenger at the expense of the offender. The law of landlord and tenant was simple: tenants-at-will, whose annual rent was under forty shillings, had to give a quarter's notice; above that amount, six months, or pay the rent for that term, or find a tenant; the landlord was bound to give the same notice, but if he sold the house, the purchaser could eject the tenant at his pleasure. On a tenant's goods being seized by his creditors, the landlord claimed priority, but only for two years' rent, his oath being held sufficient proof of the debt. The landlord of a baker was not allowed to share in the profits of his tenant's trade, or to supply him with corn. As a precaution against fire, the occupiers of large houses were expected to keep two ladders for the use of their neighbours, and, in summer, a vessel of water in front of the house. The substitutes for our modern fire-brigade and its paraphernalia consisted of two chains, two strong cords, and a strong iron crook with a wooden handle, wherewith to pull down the fragile tenements of our ancestors, who were called to the scene of destruction by the 'loudly sounding horn' of the ward-beadle.

Every householder was bound to pave the footpath before his own door, at the same level as his neighbours. The middle of the street was kept in repair by a tax called pavage, levied on horses and vehicles.

(A laden horse paid 1d. on entering or leaving the city; a cart, 1d.; carts bringing sand and potters-clay, 3d. per week; carts from Stratford, laden with corn or flour, the same; if with firewood or charcoal on sale, 1d.; but vehicles and horses bearing victuals or goods for the consumption of the owners passed free.) For the better preservation of the roadway, carts serving the citizens with firewood, sand, or stone were forbidden to be shod with iron, or to stand anywhere but at Cornhill; and when unladen, were to be driven slowly through the streets. Cartage was exacted from the owners of carts and horses let out on hire by the sergeants of the city, but they were specially charged not to molest those of poor people bringing wares for sale.

In the reign of Edward I., citizens were permitted to keep pigs 'within their houses,' but the sties might not encroach upon the street; and any unfortunate straggling porker was killed by the first person so disposed, who either kept the carcass, or returned it to its owner for a fixed sum of money. The pigs who rejoiced in being the property of the renter of St Antony's Hospital (St Antony was the patron saint of the porcine race), were permitted to roam at their own sweet will; but, to keep the privilege within due bounds, the renter was obliged to take an oath not to claim any swine found at large, nor to hang bells around any pigs but such as had been given in alms. Afterwards, bakers only were permitted to keep pigs; and a little later, it was enacted that 'swine, cows, and oxen shall on no account be reared in houses within the city.'

'Genteel dogs'—that is, dogs belonging to the nobles—were allowed the freedom of the city; but less-favoured members of the canine family were forbidden to wander about by night or day without some one to take care of them, and be responsible for their misdeeds.

Arms were generally worn in the streets during the day; but, except in the case of 'great lords or men of substance, and such of their household as go before them with lights,' no person was to carry weapons after curfew (eight o'clock), or to be out without a light; while those who could not give a satisfactory account of themselves, were expected to stay indoors altogether. Barriers and chains were placed across the streets, especially those towards the Fleet River, and the alderman and his men kept watch and ward on horseback, while the gates were guarded by the sergeants-at-arms and their 'waytes.'

Our forefathers were not insensible to the necessity of sanitary precautions. Each ward provided four men, resident therein, to preserve, lower, and raise the pavements, and to remove all nuisances and filth at the cost of their authors, who were likewise fined 4d., or their goods taken in default. Kennels were made on each side of the streets. The householder was obliged to clear away all dirt from before his own house, taking care not to transfer it to his neighbours. The rakers cleared the highway of hay, straw, rubbish, and refuse. Nothing was allowed to be thrown out of window; tailors and skinner were forced to scour their skins at night, and barbers and fishmongers were forbidden to throw their blood (barbers were surgeons then) and dirty water into the kennel, and ordered to take it privily to the river. It must not be supposed, however, that the silver Thames was then made the receptacle of nastiness, as it is in our more enlightened days. The citizens of old London took more pride in their river. With the above exceptions, no rubbish, sand, filth, or refuse was suffered to be thrown into the Thames or its tributaries—the Fleet River and Walbrook. All boats taking in hay, straw, or rushes were to start

immediately they were laden, and to pay 12d. for cleansing the place where their cargo was unloaded. Places were provided for burying butchers' offal, and the practice of carrying it to the Thames forbidden; and it was death to bathe in the river near the Tower. The householders dwelling on the banks of the Walbrook had to provide themselves with rakes, to intercept any unclean thing thrown into it. Water was conveyed from the Thames in carts, the charge being fixed as follows: From Dowgate or Castle Baynard to Cheap, 1½d.; beyond that distance, 2d.; but the main supply was derived from the City Conduit at the east end of Cheap, the water of which brewers and maltsters were not allowed to use.

Ships and boats could only be moored at night on the city side of the river. All boats going to Gravesend, loaded at St Botolph's Wharf, near the Tower, where all bringing 'small victuals' from the eastward discharged their load; here, too, passengers might land with a wallet, fardel, male, or panyer, carried under the arm, without paying wharfage. The charge for a boat from Billingsgate to Gravesend was fixed at 2d., and by an enactment of later date, no waterman was to charge more than 3d. for his whole boat between London and Westminster. London Bridge was provided with a drawbridge, for raising which pontage was exacted from vessels passing with merchandise.

The punishments awarded to criminals consisted of death, pillory, imprisonment, and fine. Of these, the pillory was most used. We find it adjudged for the following offences: For pretending to be one of the sheriff's sergeants, and arresting the bakers of Stratford, to extract a fine from them; for pretending to be a king's officer; for pretending to be a physician; for pretending to be the summoner of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and so summoning the Prioress of Clerkenwell; for cutting off pouches; for cutting off a sword; for stealing a child to go begging; for playing with false dice; for begging under false pretences; for practising soothsaying for the discovery of stolen property; for practising magic; for bribing an approver to bring a charge against a certain brewer; for stealing a leg of mutton; for pretending to be a holy hermit; for begging in behalf of the Hospital of Bethlehem; for using unstamped measures; for forging letters, bonds, and deeds; for counterfeiting the seals of the pope and certain nobles. Persons denounced at the Wardmote for leading a notoriously bad life were committed to prison; and women of bad character, after being pilloried for a first offence, if found guilty a third time, were turned out of the city altogether. Drawing a sword, dagger, or knife, was punished by a fine of half a mark, or fifteen days in Newgate; but if blood was drawn, a fine of 20s., or forty days. Striking with the fist, without drawing blood, was liable to 2s., or eight days; with blood, 40 pence, or twelve days—the offender also paying damages to the injured individual, and finding sureties for future good behaviour. Such cases were tried day by day before the sheriff. Any felon who avoided the law by taking sanctuary, was to be watched till he surrendered, or abjured the realm; should he escape, the ward was fined 100s. Prisoners were confined in Newgate, Ludgate, the Tun, and the two Compters—the last four were used for debtors and the more trivial offenders; those convicted of anything short of felony, by paying, as their means allowed, 4d., 6d., 8d., or 12d. per week to the sheriffs, being allowed to remove from Newgate, either bringing their bed with them thence, or paying the prison-porter one penny per night for the use of one, 'as is the manner in all lodging-houses.' From that official they could also obtain bread, ale, wood, and charcoal, at reasonable price and just measure.

Singularly enough, among this century of enact-



ments and records, we find no allusion whatever to drunkenness or to burial usages. Whether it was impossible to be guilty of the former on the ale of mediæval brewers, or whether it was so common as not to constitute an offence, is an open question. The omission of the latter is yet more curious, as our ancestors certainly died, and somebody as certainly must have buried them; but if the *Liber Albus* be silent on the matter of death, it is eloquent on matters appertaining to preserving life, and replete with regulations respecting eating, drinking, and comforting the inner man.

If an Englishman wishes to appraise the merits and demerits of the so-called 'paternal' system of government, he cannot do better than study the civic records of the fourteenth century. Protection in its widest sense was adopted by the authorities, and the word 'competition' must have been unknown to the language. Little scope was left for any display of ability in the art of trading, the trader's course being marked out for him from beginning to end. What he should sell, when he should sell, how he should sell, where he should sell, and to whom he should sell, were all settled for him by proclamation, enactment, and assize. A man was not only told at what price he must part with his goods, but if he withdrew from the trade because the profits would not support him, he was excluded from ever returning to it, and deprived of the freedom of the city! The only excuse for these tyrannous regulations is, that they originated in an earnest desire to protect the purchaser from being cheated in quantity, quality, or price; that they did not succeed in so doing, is evident from the many ordinances issued regarding the same commodity.

Bread, as was natural, was the subject of more than ordinary care; that made without the city, at Stratford, Bromley, Stepney, and St Albans, was considered inferior to the city bread, and at times was prohibited altogether—a fate that often awaited the loaves of Southwark, because 'the bakers of Southwark are not amenable to the justice of the city.' There seems to have been three sorts of bread in use—*tourte*, or brown bread, made of unbolted meal; *wastel*, French, or puffed, answering to our 'seconds'; and *demeine*, or lord's bread, being the best white bread, and double the price of *wastel*. The baker of white was not allowed to sell brown bread; and the baker of the latter was forbidden to have a bolter in his possession, to sell to a retailer, or supply any one with flour. Loaves were made in sizes to sell at two or four for a penny; they were sold in the public markets, and also by female retailers or regratresses, who carried them from door to door, their profit consisting of the thirteenth loaf of the 'baker's dozen.' Substantial people had a right to send their servants to see the dough kneaded, and every loaf was impressed with the baker's seal, a counterpart of which was in the hands of the alderman of the ward. From time to time, the officers of the city visited the ovens to test the weight and quality of the bread while hot, and punish the maker if his batch was inferior to the assize. Bakers were forbidden to heat their ovens with fern, straw, reeds, or stubble; to use fountain-water for kneading; to buy corn for re-sale; to give credit to a regratress in debt elsewhere; to entice away the servants of their neighbours, or employ those of the trade who left their places without a licence; to carry bludgeons, or to take a business, unless provided with sureties, and possessed of chattels worth forty shillings. If found guilty of selling bread below the standard, the offending baker had the offending loaf hung round his neck, and was drawn on a hurdle through the most frequented and dirtiest streets; on a repetition of his crime, he was drawn through Cheap, and pilloried for

an hour; and a third offence was punished in addition by the destruction of his oven, and his being prohibited from carrying on the trade again. Corn-dealers and millers were not forgotten. The former were not allowed to sell by sample, or to mix good and bad grain together, on pain of forfeiture; the latter were remunerated by a halfpenny in meal and threepence in money for grinding a quarter of corn, the grain being duly weighed before delivery to the miller. In Richard II.'s reign, it was ordered that every house using two bushels a week should grind for themselves. When a miller was detected pilfering from the grist, the mill-horse was impounded till the proprietor handed over the offender for punishment, and made amends to the defrauded customer, until which time all persons were forbidden to send grain to that mill.

The great markets for meat were held at St Nicholas Shambles, near Newgate, and at Stocks Market (the site of the Mansion House); they were closed at dark. Butchers were not permitted to sell suet, tallow, or lard, to be taken beyond the sea. The poulterers dealt in poultry, game, rabbits, and eggs; those free of the city stood at the west side of St Michael's, Cornhill; those who entered London by Newgate and Aldersgate, located themselves by the butchers' stalls in St Nicholas Shambles; and the foreigners sold their stock at the corner of Leadenhall. No forestalling was allowed, and the seller of unsound poultry was pilloried, and the condemned bird or birds burned under his nose. By a proclamation of Edward I., it was ordered that 'no poulterer, fishmonger, or regrater shall buy any kind of victuals for re-sale, until prime (6 A.M.) has been rung out at St Paul's, so that the buyers for the king and great lords of the land and the good people of the city may make good their purchases so far as they shall need.'

Fish appear to have been in great demand among the middle and poorer classes; we find the following descriptions mentioned: Bass, barbel, cod, conger, cockles, dory, dabs, dace, eels, flounders, herring, haddock, lamprey, muscles, mackerel, oysters, pike, porpoise, ray, roach, sturgeon, sole, surmullet, salmon, sealing, sprats, shad, smelts, stickelings, scalloysters, stockfish, turbot, and whelks. Lobsters, crabs, and shrimps seem to have been unknown to the Londoners. Salmon, cod, herring, haddock, mackerel, conger, and ling were brought to market salted as well as fresh. The retail fishmarkets were in Bridge Street, Old Fish Street, and West Cheap; then existed fish-shops in Queen Hythe, which, with London Bridge and Billingsgate, was a principal landing-place for fish. The number of enactments respecting this important trade is extraordinarily great. No fish was to be bought till the vessel was moored; citizens had the privilege of purchasing at the same rate as the dealers, but apprentices were not allowed to enter a vessel for that purpose. No one might retail fish on the quay, or carry cooked whelks for sale at all. Sprats and whelks were sold by the tandel or half tandel (a measure which baffles identification); sturgeon by the barrel, all in one barrel being of one taking and curing. Porpoise was sold from the boat, whole or in slices, the Bridge bailiff first receiving his fee in the shape of the fins, tail, and entrails. Lampreys of Nantes, when bought for retailing, were to be sold within four days after landing, in Old Fish Street, after which period they were not to be sold in less quantities than dozens or half-dozens. Muscles, whelks, and cockles, probably because they were a favourite food with the poor, could not be bought for re-sale. Retailers were also forbidden to purchase herrings, mackerel, or other fish brought into town by cart, till noon. When fish were sold by the basket, the latter must be capable of holding one

bushel of oats, while the fish must be of one sort only, and of one quality, so that the legal luminaries of the period escaped the difficulty of deciding as to the right of crabs to be included among 'mixed fish.'

The consumption of so much fish doubtless contributed towards making our ancestors a thirsty race; a multitude of brewers satisfied that thirst, although the trade was one of little repute, and carried on principally by females. As soon as a brewing was completed, the ale was tasted by the ale-conner of the ward, who, if he found it inferior to the assize, ordered it to be sold at a lower price, disobedience to which was visited with fine, imprisonment, and pillory. Ancient ale was drunk quite new, and if we may judge from the quart being the smallest measure ever alluded to, could scarcely have been of a very intoxicating nature. Customers used to send their vessels to the brewery, where they stood all night, to allow the ale time to work, so as to be by the morning 'good and clear.' Tavern-keepers and victuallers—the latter sold provisions only—did not receive any guests as lodgers: those who did so were called hostellers, from whence probably comes 'mine host;' they, in their turn, were restricted to serving their visitors, and could not bake or brew for themselves, or keep a guest longer than a day and a night, unless they made themselves responsible for any offence he might commit. The hostellers, with few exceptions, were freemen, strangers and foreigners being jealously excluded from the trade. Dealers in sweet wines were forbidden to sell any other description; and dealers in the unsweet wines were ordered not to keep Gascon, Rochelle, or Spanish wine in the same cellar with Rhenish. Before it could be sold, the wine was officially scrutinised, gauged, and assessed; unsound and sound, new and old, were not allowed to be mixed together, and the taverner was compelled to dispose of his old wine before he sold any of his new. There is no mention of flasks or bottles, so we must infer that wines were always sold on draught. To guard against adulteration, or substitution of an inferior liquor, every customer had a right to see that the measure was clean, and to be present at the drawing of the wine from the cask. All taverns and breweries closed at curfew, in default of which the taverner had to give up his silver drinking-mug, as a pledge of future good-behaviour, in addition to paying a fine to the city.

Even at this early period, England carried on an extensive trade with other countries, although the imports unduly preponderated. The exports were limited to corn, wood, hides, butter—a thin, serous butter, sold by liquid measure; but France, Greece, and Italy sent their wines; Spain, her wine, wool, and squirrel-skins; Brabant and Flanders, their rayed cloths; Limoges furnished its textures, Rheims its fabrics, and Prussia her stockfish. The Hanse merchants, and those of Amiens, Corby, Neale, and Cologne, enjoyed many privileges, and were exempt from many of the annoyances systematically visited upon foreign traders by the illiberal spirit of the age. Thus foreigners were prohibited keeping hostels, selling by retail, acting as brokers, buying dyed cloth when wet, making dye, or 'doing any work that belonged to a citizen.' Alien poulterers must not sell privately, or warehouse their stock, or lodge under the roof of a freeman. Foreign butchers were forbidden to carry any carcass to market without the hide, and ordered to sell their meat by retail until noon, by wholesale from that time to vespers, when they were obliged to get rid of their remaining stock at any price, being forbidden to carry any away for salting or storing. Forty days' stay was the utmost allowed to foreign visitors to London. Such was the extraordinary jealousy displayed by the citizens towards strangers,

that the only charitable construction we can put upon it is, that they believed their city possessed such attractions that unless they rendered it as disagreeable as possible to them, they would be overwhelmed and outnumbered by continental rivals. Indeed, Andrew Borde, some hundred and fifty years later, when the laws regarding strangers were less stringent, urges the great number of resident foreigners as a decisive proof of the superiority of London over all European capitals.

We might prolong this paper almost indefinitely, so full is the *Liber Albus* of interesting and suggestive matter; but we have done sufficient to shew its importance as a help to the study of our country's history, and point out a rich mine of wealth to those interested in mediæval antiquities; and in conclusion, must express our hope that this volume, so excellently edited by Mr Riley, may be but the precursor of the publication of the other treasures of the Guildhall Library.

### CAST ADRIFT.

I HAD risen early and lain down late in the vain effort to better myself in the old country; the very struggle for life was a hard one; so at length I resolved to follow the universal law, which, like the instinct of the bees, bids the young go forth to seek new settlements, and going round half the globe, endeavour either among the gold regions of Australia, or its luxuriant corn-fields, to win competence and a home, not only for myself, but for my mother and her orphan niece, whom I hoped some day to make my wife.

The parting with those dear ones over, I embarked in a small trader, investing my surplus funds in the purchase of such goods as were likely to realise double their value at my destination. The first half of our voyage progressed favourably, but off Cape L'Agulhas we encountered a severe gale, and lost our fore-yard, which necessitated our putting into Algoa Bay to replace it. It was night when we arrived, and we were all anxiety for morning, that we might see the southern land of whose beauty we had heard so much. At sunrise the announcement that a school of whales was in the bay, still further hastened our movements, for neither my fellow-passenger nor I had ever seen one. In a few minutes more we were on deck, looking eagerly at the shoal of huge, black creatures, which, like a group of moving rocks, were tossing and gamboling uncouthly as they took their leisurely yet rapid way along the bay.

From a fishery near the entrance, a whole flotilla of light, graceful whale-boats were already skimming along like sea-birds in pursuit of them; and the progress of both fish and boats was such as to make it evident that our view of the chase would be but a telescopic one. This was a great disappointment, and one that we in vain endeavoured to remedy by climbing the rigging. At this juncture my fellow-passenger remembered that one of the ship's boats was built for whaling; so we borrowed it from the captain, every sailor on board volunteering to accompany us, though we could only take four—one of them being chosen because he had been in a whaler; then jumping into the boat, we hurried off to the scene of action.

A few minutes brought us within view, and it was interesting to watch the movements of the tiny boats, as adroitly, yet cautiously, they closed around the enormous fish—for only one whale now remained, all his companions having prudently dived into deep water, and slipped out to sea—which rolled and sported in the transparent water, every now and then spouting aloft arching jets of foam, which flashed and sparkled in the sunshine like wreaths of jewels, or beating the water with his tail, until the sound echoed along the

shore; apparently unconscious of the uplifted arm of the harpooner in the prow of each advancing boat, or of the keen weapon he held aloft, ready to strike: unless, indeed, his knowledge might be inferred from the regularity wherewith, with practical humour, he was sure to sink beneath the surface at the critical moment, leaving his baffled assailants to forget their disappointment in watching for his next appearance, when the same course of manoeuvres was repeated.

So often did this happen, that we had become almost as excited and anxious as the fishers themselves, and as fearful the sport would prove a failure, when, after a fifth or sixth disappearance, the whale unexpectedly rose in our immediate neighbourhood, announcing his arrival by a grunting 'blow.'

'If we had had but a harpoon, we might have got him ourselves,' exclaimed the other passenger in a flush of excitement.

'We have, sir—we have!' cried the whaler eagerly. 'Before we came away, I put a coil of rope and the ship's harpoon in the boat, in case of accidents; and if you will row away after him, I'll bend on the rope in a minute.'

This wild proposal was received with a general shout of applause, and while the sailor prepared the harpoon, we dashed after the whale with a speed in which eagerness supplied the place of skill. By the time all was ready, we were close upon him; then poising the harpoon high above his head, the whaler—for the first time in his life, as he afterwards confessed—struck it vigorously into the side of the floating monster, who received the blow with a plunge that half filled the boat with water.

The next moment, he was diving down into the depths of the bay, where it appeared likely we should soon follow him, for our unskilled harpooner seemed scarce able to pay-out the rope with the rapidity equalling the descent of our unruly captive.

But a few minutes more saw him on the surface again, and in a paroxysm of rage, dashing on at a furious rate, and dragging us along in his rear with a velocity that almost buried our slight boat in the water, and sent the parted waves leaping from her bows in hissing surges high above our heads; while, through the opening in the watery curtain, our rapid progress gave us fleeting glimpses of land, and sea, and boats, all blent in bewildering confusion.

As our little bark was thus hurried along, a wild exultation took possession of us, which, in the men, rose to the pitch of cheers, loud and hearty enough to have scared any steeled less headstrong than our paddled one. It was impossible to doubt we were in momentary peril, for none of our crew possessed the requisite skill with the oar-rudder to follow the rapid evolutions, the diversings and unexpected returnings to the surface, of the monster; and far less did they understand that most essential point in whaling—the proper management of the harpoon rope.

For more than an hour we continued to sweep along with undiminished speed, for the strength of the whale appeared inexhaustible, however it might be with his patience, for of late he had indulged in several plunges, which had shaken our little craft to its centre, and more than once he uttered bellying roars, which echoed far and wide.

After one of these deep-mouthed cries, he suddenly paused, then turning round, came rushing back upon us with distended jaws, as if his fury had resolved to crush our fragile boat at once. The sight of the approaching monster, and his black cavernous mouth, was anything but pleasant even to our enthusiasm. The men cried aloud, and waved their arms, to deter him, but he did not appear to hear them; then they seized the oars, resolved to give him battle, but he passed beyond their reach, his great size contrasting awfully with our small proportions; then just as he

had gone by, he raised his enormous tail nearly twenty feet into the air, and with one powerful blow struck our boat, dashing it in pieces, and leaving us struggling in the water, all save the poor whaler, who having become entangled in the harpoon rope, was borne off by the victorious animal. A few minutes after, another boat having struck and killed the fish, the poor fellow was rescued, but insensible, and so nearly drowned that he was with difficulty restored to life. Meanwhile, other boats clustered round, picked us up, and took us back to our ship.

Occupied by our whale-chase, and afterwards in the resuscitation of our unfortunate comrade, we had not noticed that the calm of the morning had given place to a strong south-east breeze, which was raising the broad expanse of the bay into large crested waves, that, rolling onward to the beach, broke on it in thundering surges, and as at that time the bay boasted no jetty, stopping all communication with the shore. Never, during all our voyage, did our vessel pitch as she did that day, for the bay, fifteen miles from point to point, lay open to the winds, and to the full sweep of the South Atlantic Ocean, whose billows rising with the increasing wind each hour into loftier swells, broke angrily against the bows of the labouring vessel, and then, with a sullen surge, swept on. Fortunately for themselves, the fishers had anchored their whale, and after leaving us at our ship, hastened to the land, which they gained with difficulty.

The cloudless blue of the tropical sky was overhead, and the brilliant southern sun shone down gloriously upon the scene, lighting up the clear blue waves, and adding to the dazzling whiteness of their surging summits, and to the radiance of the gem-like spray, which bounded high into the air above them. But it shed no brightness on the solitary little bark, which, with doubled anchors and lowered masts, struggled so hardly for life amid that waste of raging water; for, with the passing day, yet wilder and fiercer waxed the storm, and louder roared the foaming waves among which we tossed so fearfully, sometimes cast aloft on the ridges of lofty billows, until we thought our cables must part with the sudden strain; at others, almost buried in the depths of seething abysses, whence it seemed unlikely we should ever rise again; while every now and then, some enormous wave would strike full against us with frightful violence, and breaking over our bows, roll along the deck, with force that threatened to bear all before it, the which we only escaped by clinging to the ropes and rigging.

The sun at length set, and darkness began to close over us, doubling the horrors of the still increasing tempest. Suddenly, a wild cry from the bow rose above the howling of the storm, and looking ahead, we perceived a huge mountain of water rolling rapidly along the bay, its lofty crest and seething sides gleaming with phosphoric light, as rising each instant higher, it towered above our masts, ready to overwhelm and sink our frail ship at her anchors. We were in imminent peril, and one that no human effort could evade or lessen; the only thing left us was submission, and bowing to our fate, we quietly awaited it. The fatal moment had apparently come, for the huge wave was hovering over our devoted vessel, when she unexpectedly rose on the crest of a smaller one, presenting her bows to the enormous billow, which struck against her with a violence that threatened to shatter her. The water and spray fell over her in a blinding deluge, the unfortunate vessel moaned and trembled as if her hour were come, and there was a terrible, though momentary struggle. The next, the wave passed on, leaving us afloat; but both our cables had parted with the shock, and we found we were being swept back from the anchorage towards the long line of surf-bound coast under our

lee. Ere we had reached more than half-way to the shore, a whole line of beacon-fires blazed suddenly up, revealing the tremendous surf that broke along the beach. A short space more, and we reached its outer edge, and struck heavily upon the rocks, while the breakers roared and surged fiercely around us, as if eager to begin their work. But the next high wave swept us further on, to strike again and again, until, ere many minutes were over, the good ship that had borne us more than five thousand miles in safety, was cast on her broadside in the raging surf, whose waves, rising in high, roaring crests, broke over her in foaming cascades.

Fortunately, our vessel had fallen shoreward, otherwise, our fate must have been certain and instantaneous. But even as it was, what hope could we have of life, clinging to bolts and rings along our sloping deck, and with that fearful cataract sweeping over us, and those great surging waves rolling between us and safety? Meanwhile, high above our heads stretched the clear, dark-blue sky; and the brilliant constellations of the south shone calmly down upon the scene, as if to shew how far removed was heaven from earth.

It seemed doubly hard to perish so close to land, and with numbers of our fellow-creatures standing but a few fathoms from us. Suddenly, from among the crowd, a rocket shot up into the sky right over our vessel, and fell into the sea beyond; the next moment, the mate sprang forward to catch the line it had brought from the shore, and drawing in-board the strong rope attached to it, secured it to the rigging. And by this rope, half-buried in the surf, it was that, if at all, we must save our lives. It was a fearful venture, only suited to an extremity such as ours; and even then, with the sea breaking over us, and the unfortunate vessel grinding to pieces beneath our feet, there was a momentary hesitation ere any one would commit himself to so frail a bridge.

As I stood nearest, I proffered to lead the way, and in another minute was launched among the waves, clinging to the supporting rope. Never shall I forget the struggle that ensued—how the great breakers curled around me, surging angrily above my head; how furiously they dashed and bent against me, and, as though they had been instinct with demon-life, strove to tear me from my refuge, all the while muttering in my ears hoarse threats of sweeping me out to sea among the dark, inexorable billows raging for a victim. At length my feet touched land, and my heart bounded with joy even among the breakers; the next moment, an immense wave broke over me, tearing my rope from its fastenings, casting me helplessly down on the beach, and sweeping me back again in its retreat. Then came a rush and a whirl, and ringing noises in my ears, which are only heard by drowning men, and I knew nothing more. But brave men linked themselves hand to hand, and venturing deep into the surf, risked their own lives to save mine.

A hearty, generous cheer from the wreck greeted my landing, and never shall I forget its warmth. Then another rocket was thrown over the vessel, and the rope secured anew, and then, through much peril, the shipwrecked voyagers reached the shore—all save one, my late fellow-passenger, and he was swept from the rope, and tossed among the breakers, as I had been, but less fortunate than I, was swept out to sea, and never heard of more.

I was bruised, bewildered, and exhausted by my passage through the surf, and filled with deep grief for the lost man, who had been my almost inseparable companion during our twelve weeks' voyage; and, until I saw the ship breaking in pieces before my eyes, I scarce remembered that I stood alone and penniless upon a foreign shore—cast utterly adrift;

for with the loss of the ship, of course, my passage to Australia was lost; my little venture also had perished with her, and as I had not taken the precaution to insure it, I had no means left to pursue my voyage. However, I was young, and, despite the past, still hopeful, and I entertained the general idea, that in a colony, none who were strong and willing to work, need want; but I found it widely otherwise. The country was in a state of extreme commercial depression, owing to a recent Caffre war, and not the humblest clerkship was to be obtained. From the same cause, no agriculturist wanted assistance; and as the war was over, even 'food for powder' was not in request. I thought of a school, but found they abounded; I offered to teach French and German, but all either knew them already, or else did not wish to learn.

I was well-nigh starving, and in despair; and day after day of enforced idleness I paced the sands with increasing heaviness of heart, sometimes arraigning the Providence that had left me to want, and swept off my fellow-passenger, whose prospects the wreck would not have injured; at others, regretting that I had not perished also.

A subscription had been raised for the poor shipwrecked mariners—none thought of the poor shipwrecked passenger—and they had since entered on board other vessels, all but the whaler, and he had obtained employment at the fishery. By a sudden impulse, I resolved to follow him there, and, to my astonishment, I was accepted, for they were short of hands, and that morning's amateur whaling had raised all concerned in their estimation. It was a strange employment for an educated man, and, stranger still, for the first time in my life, I prospered. The boat in which I rowed was sure to be successful, and after a time, when I was able to take harpoon in hand, it never failed to strike home, and send us back with flying colours to receive the winner's reward.

The close of the fishing-season left me with a small surplus, and until the commencement of the next I employed myself in building, with my own hands, on a lot of land which I had purchased, a house to harbour my home-friends. It was, indeed, a hard beginning, but it has proved a good one. Year after year, I went on in the same course, until I became a partner in the fishery, and in progress of time, the sole proprietor. Years have passed since I have needed to cast a harpoon, save in the way of amusement; and though the idea may not be flattering to my vanity, I am constrained to believe that I have found my true vocation.

#### TRADE IN DIAMONDS.

Known from very early times, the diamond has always retained for itself the principal place among jewels. Still in the east, a superstitious feeling attaches itself to this stone, about which innumerable fables have, in various ages, been current. The orientals believe that certain diamonds shine in the dark, so as to be used by solitary students for lamps; and at Bagdad they say, in the reign of Haroun al Raschid, a youth was discovered in an oratory reading the Koran by the light of a diamond as large as a hen's egg. With respect to size, the exaggeration is not very great, since the stone found at Kolor fell little short, before it was cut and polished, of the dimensions attributed to the Bagdad stone by the imagination of the Arabs.

The trade in diamonds, though often highly lucrative, did not form a separate branch of commerce till a comparatively recent date, and even now is seldom entirely detached from the traffic in other gems; yet



it demands so much skill, acuteness, and experience, that those only achieve great success who devote themselves exclusively to this department of trade. Its profitableness, however, depends much on fashion, on accidental variations in public taste, and on fluctuations in the supply, regulated by no law, and therefore not to be foreseen or guarded against. Where these glittering vanities will turn up, science is unable to determine. They are found in mountains and on plains, in ploughed fields and in marshes, in India, in Siberia, in Borneo, and in Brazil. Sometimes there is a scarcity of them, at other times a glut; but whether scarce or plentiful, there has never since their discovery been a period during which they have not constituted a favourite article of regal and imperial magnificence, and been thought to lend additional splendour to beauty itself.

Throughout the east, queens and princesses never consider themselves properly apparelled unless they have a blaze of diamonds about their waists, ornaments of the same gems flashing between the tresses of their raven hair, and descending in festoons upon their bosoms. Sultans and chiefs also aim at producing effect upon their subjects by decorating their persons after the same fashion, and studying the hilts and scabbards of their poniards and sabres with jewels. Here, in Europe, the same taste, a little modified, prevails. Men do not consider it effeminate or ridiculous to wear diamond-rings, while women are often vainer of these brilliants than of their own personal charms. The wife of an English ambassador appeared, not very long ago, at the French court with a million's worth of jewels on her dress, so that, as she moved beneath the vast chandeliers of the Tuileries, she looked like a personification of the mines of Golconda. Most persons will remember what marvels have been wrought by diamond-necklaces, and how the fate of thrones and the destinies of whole nations have been influenced by one woman's passion for these adornments. Once at Calcutta, a curious substitute for diamonds was used by a lady at the governor-general's ball. She caught a number of fireflies, and stitched them to her dress in diminutive bags of gauze. The effect was striking beyond conception. As she moved, the flies shot forth their light, so that the side of her dress which was turned from the chandelier seemed to be spotted with fire.

With the changing phases of civilisation, all kinds of jewels rise or fall in public esteem. The diamond seems to have exerted its greatest influence during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, when the belief in its mysterious properties was still rife throughout Christendom. Merchants then travelled over the whole east, exposing themselves to every kind of peril, and enduring hunger, thirst, and extreme fatigue, to collect these glittering spoils of the earth, by dealing in which they amassed princely fortunes, purchased immense estates, and founded powerful families. Accident occasionally came to the aid of their skill and intrepidity. Amid the ruins, for example, of Constantinople, a poor boy picked up a diamond which he sold to a janizary for fourpence; the soldier, in his turn, disposed of it to some one else for a few shillings; and thus the jewel proceeded from hand to hand, until, for a comparatively small sum, it became the property of a merchant, who obtained for it, from Sultan Mourad II., the sum of a hundred thousand crowns. So, again, in India, a poor peasant, turning up the soil with his plough, was struck by the peculiar glitter of a pebble lying among other stones. Stopping his oxen, he picked it up, and though he understood nothing of gems, immediately, with the quickness of an oriental, persuaded himself he had found a prize. Abandoning his plough, therefore, and wrapping up the pebble in a rag, he walked, barefoot, a distance of forty miles, to Golconda, where his

good-fortune directed him to an honest merchant, who informed him he was in possession of the largest diamond in the world. What sum he obtained for it, is not stated; but it was sufficient to enrich both himself and his descendants. The history of this stone, if it could be given in full, would form a volume. Having been purchased by an ambitious chief, eager to barter his ornaments for political power, he presented it to the great descendant of Baber, Aurungzebe. From him it passed down, through various vicissitudes, to the last Sikh ruler of the Punjab, and became, by victory, the property of the East India Company. However vast might be its value, they made a present of it to the Queen; and under the name of Kohinoor, or Mountain of Light, it was beheld by millions of the English people, beneath a strong iron grating, at the Great Exhibition of 1851.

When a diamond-merchant travelled eastward from Europe, wherever he made known his destination, princes and grandees were sure to intrust him with fresh orders, particularly in Turkey and Persia. Before he reached India, therefore, his commissions were often so numerous that he had much difficulty, even in the mart of Golconda, to find gems sufficient to supply the demands of his customers. The great traveller, Tavernier, may be looked upon as a fair representative of the diamond-dealers of his age. Being a man of more than ordinary intelligence, who extended the sphere of his observations considerably beyond the limits of commerce, he was often consulted by the most powerful princes, whose understandings, however, were not always commensurate with their riches and authority. Of a conversation which he once had with a shah of Persia, he has left a minute and curious account; but as it did not turn on the diamond-trade, it would be beside our purpose to repeat it. When he made known his intention of visiting the Indian mines, most of those with whom he conversed sought to dissuade him from realising his design, by representing them as encircled by every kind of danger, malaria of the most deadly kind, forests infested by wild beasts, and tribes of men surpassing the worst of these in ferocity. But the traveller, confiding in his own experience, despised all their warnings. He had invariably found perils vast and threatening at a distance diminish as he approached, especially where he had to deal with men, who might generally be conciliated by fair words and the act of putting confidence in them.

The condition of the Decan, it must be owned, was far better then than it has been since. At the present day, it would hardly be safe for a merchant with large bags of gold to travel from the coast of Malabar, through the gorges of the Western Ghats, to Bejapore and Golconda, since he would be nearly certain to encounter predatory bands of Arabs, breaking away, perhaps, from the service of the Nizam, or on the way to offer to His Highness the use of their swords. Thugs, Phansigurs, Dakoits, and other robbers, in spite of the police organised by the English, might likewise have something to say to his treasures and to his throat. But in those days of Mogul supremacy, when the sceptre of Delhi was stretched with more or less vigour over all India, the adventurous diamond-merchant landed at Surat, familiar to all readers of the *Arabian Nights*, and made his way without let or hindrance to Golconda. There, under the charge of an apothecary, he left a large portion of his wealth, and with the remainder proceeded to the mines.

Nearly all the old writers describe the scene of their operations in a vague and unsatisfactory manner, which imparts an air of romance to their accounts, but compels us to have recourse to more modern authorities when we would acquire precise information.

The diamond-mines of India are chiefly situated between the Kistnah and Pennar rivers, and many of them cluster about both banks of the latter stream. The gems are found in the alluvial soil, or in rocks of the most recent formation, in lands not greatly elevated above the level of the sea. Not far distant, however, are ranges of hills about a thousand feet in height, in one of which the Pennar rises, and after forcing its way through a gap in the other, flows through a channel alternately soft and rocky, through the district of Nellore. The search for diamonds still goes on as of old; the speculators farm from the government plots of ground, more or less extensive, which they enclose with a low fence, within which they carry on their operations. Large gems are rarely found, but when they do turn up, a third of their value is claimed by the government, which is therefore far more grasping and oppressive than in the seventeenth century, when it was satisfied with a duty of 2 per cent. from the seller and buyer. The enthusiasm which once animated this branch of industry has almost entirely died away. The work is carried on languidly both here and at Sumbhulpore on the Mahanuddy, where 60,000 men, women, and children were once beheld diffused like swarms of bees over the plain, digging, washing, sorting, or bearing bags of jewels in the matrix to the offices of the overseers. Smaller diamonds are discovered by their sparkle amid the gravel, which shews they are only fragments of larger stones broken by accident, because when entire they are wrapped in a crust, polished and shining indeed like pebbles on the seashore, but disclosing no other symptoms of the brilliance within.

Nothing like a philosophical history of precious stones has yet been written. We know nothing of the chemical process by which nature forms them, nothing of the materials of which they are composed, for all that has been discovered by experiment amounts to this, that the diamond may be destroyed by immense heat. Practically, it is observed that it acquires certain peculiarities from the nature of the soil in which it is found. When perfect, it exactly resembles so much pure water, congealed by nature's chemistry, and rendered harder than the hardest metal. When its interior is exposed, by polishing, to the light, the rays of the sun descend into its depths, and playing and wandering there, are reflected, refracted, and intermingled, so as to produce an almost supernatural blaze of splendour. From this unclouded brilliance, the diamond passes through a thousand intermediate changes to absolute black, when it presents the appearance of translucent ebony. Occasionally, when it has been steeped for thousands of years in a morass, it assumes the hues of the beryl or of the topaz, or even of a very pale sapphire. The last is least in esteem among the merchants, who detect its lurking blue by examining it under the thick foliage of a tree. In Europe, lapidaries study the water of the diamond in broad daylight; but the Hindoos, for this purpose, prefer the night. Placing a powerful lamp in a square opening in a wall, they stand before it, and hold up the diamond between the finger and thumb against the stream of light, which enables them to detect the minutest flaw in its interior.

When the trade was at its height, a merchant arriving from foreign countries was waited on by the governor, who explained the rules in conformity with which business was carried on in the place; he then, if the stranger consented, took all the money he had brought with him into his keeping, and bound himself to answer for its safety to the smallest fraction; but both Mohammedan and Hindoo dealers were so addicted to the practice of fraud, that the government found itself under the necessity of keeping the strictest possible watch upon them. A secret war,

indeed, was always carried on between the rulers and the merchants—the former seeking to obtain their share of all profits made; the latter, to elude their demands. In Tavernier's case, four inferior officers were granted him, nominally as a guard of honour, but in fact as spies upon his proceedings, for, having never been accustomed to honesty, the worthy governor found himself under the necessity of suspecting and watching everybody. But Hindoo craft easily outgeneraled the heavy wits of the Moslems. One day, as the traveller was seated enjoying himself in the midst of his guards, a native merchant approached, dressed in mean attire, and displaying every external token of poverty, but, accustomed to the devices of the Hindoos, the European took no notice of this fact, and invited the Banian to sit down beside him. He was, of course, a dealer in precious stones, though, apprehensive of the rapacity of the government, or preferring mystery before open dealing, he would not enter upon business in presence of the Mohammedan guards. He had, however, timed his visit well; the hour of prayer approached, when these disciples of Mohammed would, he conjectured, in spite of all earthly considerations, depart to repeat their orisons in the mosque. As soon as the muezzin's voice was heard from a neighbouring minaret summoning the faithful to their devotions, three of the four spies attended to the call; but the fourth, having the fear of the governor before his eyes, remained to observe the dealings of the Frank and the Hindoo. Tavernier, however, was not to be so disappointed; pretending to be without bread, he despatched the Moslem to the town in search of some, and was thus at liberty to converse on business with the Banian.

The Hindoo, now unrolling his long dark hair, drew forth from among its plaits a diamond of so rare a lustre that the traveller was struck with extraordinary admiration. It weighed nearly fifty carats, and its pure transparency appeared to be without flaw; but the money he had with him fell greatly short of the price of so precious a jewel, though he could not restrain himself from gazing at its beauty. 'Do not waste your time,' said the Hindoo, 'but meet me in the evening outside the city walls; bring a sufficient sum along with you, and the diamond shall be yours.' At the time appointed, just as the shades of evening were thickening into night, the merchant, without attendant or witness, repaired to the place of meeting, and the dealer, being true to his word, brought along with him the gem, which Tavernier afterwards sold to a Dutch officer on the Malabar coast for what he called an honest profit, which, in all likelihood, was considerable.

The quickness and penetration of the diamond-dealers of Golconda, which invariably excite the astonishment of strangers, may easily be accounted for by the nature of their business education. At the age of six years, the sons of the dealers commence their studies; not in schools or colleges, but on the public mart. The boys are formed into a sort of guild, at the head of which is the senior of the company. They are each furnished with a bag of gold and a pair of scales, and thus equipped, they seat themselves cross-legged in a circle, and await in silence the coming of the sellers. When a person with any precious stone presents himself, he delivers it to the head of the guild, who, after due deliberation, hands it to the boy next to him in age, and he to the next, until it has made the circuit of the whole body. It is supposed that by some touch of the hand given while passing on the gem, the boys intimate to each other their favourable or unfavourable opinion, for not a word is spoken or a look exchanged, as far as the keenest observer can perceive. The diamond is then weighed, and either bought or rejected. Every day they make up their accounts, and divide the profits equally

among them all, save that one quarter per cent. is given in addition to the eldest boy. If, however, he should be unlucky enough to make a bad bargain, the entire loss falls upon him. But so great, as a rule, is their skill, that any member of the guild will, in case of pressure, take at its full price the purchase of any other without the least examination.

Much the same system is pursued by the older dealers, except that they affect greater mystery. It has been already stated that a percentage of the gains made by the dealers is paid to the government; and as eastern rulers are often unscrupulous in all transactions with their subjects, the latter have recourse to the most subtle craft in self-defence. This fact will satisfactorily account for the following mystical method of buying and selling. The nature of the article to be transferred and the denomination of the coin being understood, the seller spreads out the end of his waist-shawl, and places his hand beneath it; the buyer immediately introduces his hand likewise, and the pantomime commences. The use of language on these occasions is entirely abjured, so that, on the Exchange of Golconda, millions may pass from man to man in absolute silence. Two or three hundred merchants, perhaps, seated in couples upon the floor, are engaged in making bargains, which, taken altogether, would represent the wealth of whole kingdoms. When the buyer offers a thousand pagodas, he grasps the entire hand of the seller, and for every thousand gives a separate pressure. If he grasps the fingers only, he means five hundred; one finger, one hundred; from the middle joint, fifty; from the lower, ten. There are masonic tokens for smaller sums, but these seem to have escaped detection. It is obviously practicable for persons who do business after this fashion to estimate their own income-tax in defiance of the government myrmidons, and thus the most opulent of the Hindoos are able to conceal the amount of their riches, and the extent of the transactions they carry on.

Most Asiatics entertain peculiar notions respecting silence, and it was from them, unquestionably, that Pythagoras learned to associate diase of the tongue with the study of wisdom. At the Borneo diamond-mines there is a superstition connected with this subject, which may be worth mentioning. The persons employed in the washings are enjoined to abstain at least from loud talking, lest they should offend the presiding spirit of the mines, who, in revenge for the disturbance of his repose, might frustrate their search after the riches he dispenses to mortals. Yet all sounds are not displeasing to him: with the voice of a woman's singing his ear is charmed; and if, in addition to a sweet voice, she happen to possess a beautiful countenance, he pours the jewels without stint into her lap.

A complete revolution was brought about in the diamond-trade, in 1844, by the discovery of the mines of Sincura, in Brazil. For ages, it had been known that the diamond was produced in that empire, whence the king of Portugal obtained the gem long regarded as the finest in the world. But in the year above mentioned, accident threw open to the enterprise of the Brazilians what may be denominated the great diamond-fields, which have been not unaptly compared to the valley of Sindebad, and the jewelled gardens of Aladdin. All the social phenomena since witnessed at the diggings of California and Australia, were then exhibited at Sincura. The sugar-growers deserted their works, the merchants their counting-houses, sailors their vessels, and even effeminate gentlemen their pleasures, and rushed to the diamond-mines, where for a while they picked up jewels by handfuls. This new source of wealth was discovered by a slave, who, having collected gems of immense value, travelled a great distance to dispose of them. The avarice of

the authorities being thus excited, the slave was seized and thrown into prison, where means—none of the gentlest, we may be sure—were employed to compel him to disclose the site of his discovery. But the obstinacy of the African proved more than an equal match for the cruelty of the Brazilians, though not for their cunning. His escape was purposely connived at, but several Indians were put upon his trail, and these following him like blood-hounds night and day, at length beheld him rooting up for diamonds at the foot of the Sincura Mountains.

What became of the black finder is not stated; but no sooner had it been ascertained that the precious stones really existed there in great abundance, than the population of the province multiplied as if by miracle, swelling in a few months from 8000 to 30,000. To the credit of the government, freedom of search was granted to all comers, which at the outset induced the most fearful desperadoes, robbers, and murderers to engage in the operation. No police existed, provisions were scarce and difficult to be procured, and violence and assassination became common incidents. By degrees, however, a regular police was established, and a certain amount of order introduced, after which the business was conducted in something like a civilised fashion.

Three-fourths of the early exports from Sincura found their way to England, the remainder was distributed through France and Germany, and employed all the lapidaries in Europe for several years. But however abundant may be the mines, the Brazilian gems are inferior in lustre, as well as in dimensions, to the oriental. Those of Paraguaçu are of a dun colour, while such as are found at Lancoës are white or pale green, which are most highly valued in commerce. The flooding of the market occasioned by this discovery, diminished, as might have been expected, the value of diamonds, which, in a few years, sunk 25 or 30 per cent. The chemical experiments, moreover, which have lately been made in all parts of Europe, have deprived this gem of its title to be considered adamantine—incapable of being subdued by the force of the elements. Innumerable experiments, however, have now shewn that a degree of heat insufficient even to affect the polish of the ruby, will reduce the diamond to white ashes. But, though more indestructible, all rubescent gems are inferior to the diamond in beauty. In this quality it still surpasses every species of jewel, not even excepting the opal, which sometimes throws forth a wilderness of brilliant colours in the light. It has been found, in the east, that burning in a moderate fire improves the water of the diamond, and changes its hues from dusky green or beryl yellow to transparent white.

In cutting and polishing these stones, very different processes are followed in different countries. In some, a number of small facets are preferred; whilst in others, the lapidaries aim at producing longitudinal flat surfaces, which permit the rays of light to pass undisturbed into the interior of the gem, where they are met by the rays entering through other faces, and create a commingling of brilliance which appears to kindle before the eye. The objection to this latter mode of cutting is, that it greatly diminishes the weight of the stone, though it undoubtedly gains in splendour what it loses in dimensions. An anecdote is somewhere related of a Venetian lapidary who, having been employed by a prince to cut and polish a diamond, presented it to him so diminished in size, that he ordered him to be put to death. Calculating upon the possibility of such a result, the Venetian had only cut a model in glass, and carried the real diamond in his pocket. This, therefore, he produced to calm the prince's rage; but immediately, by reasoning and argument, convinced him that the jewel, if reduced according to his model, would be

worth far more than in the rough state. He was therefore commissioned to do, with the owner's consent, what, had he done it previously, would have cost him his life. Many years afterwards, he used to point jocularly to his wife's necklace, saying: 'There is what my head was thought to be worth by a king!'

### A SUSPICIOUS OVERCOAT.

AN Englishman's boast is his freedom; with a few trifling exceptions, such as slaveholding and expectorating wherever he pleases, an Englishman is as free as an American. He may be of any politics he chooses; he may profess any or no religion; he may abuse all countries, especially his own, to his heart's content; he may intone the church-service, and wear stoles and chasubles, and crosses and what not, if he can bear being hissed a little; he may wear any covering for the head which he fancies, if only he can make up his mind to bear with equanimity the street-boys' inquiries after his hatter; and of course he may walk in the streets of London on a bright summer-day with a light overcoat thrown over his arm—only then he must take the consequences.

The consequences to my friend Brown were of a very serious description: Brown was taken into custody on a charge of felony for this very offence. It was a particularly hard case, for Brown rather prided himself upon his probity, and had never stolen anything, except a few glances at a pretty woman, since he was at school, and then his thefts had only assumed the modified form of 'cribbing' his lessons. Moreover, Brown came of a family of acknowledged rectitude: his father had been curate of a large parish with a small income; he had discharged his duties to his church and to society in a particularly zealous manner; to the former, by working himself into a consumption, of which he died at the age of thirty-four; and to the latter, by increasing its numbers with a family of seven. Yet the son of such a man, to question whose honour, let alone honesty, were to run a hundred-bladed penknife into the tenderest part of his body, found himself one summer-day in the grasp of a policeman.

Now, it happened on this wise. My friend, John Brown, in July 1857, found himself the fortunate possessor of six weeks' holidays. These he was invited to spend with some kind friends at their house a few miles from London; and this simple incident was the origin of poor Brown's misfortune; for if he had not had to take a short drive into town on the day he left them, he would not have had an overcoat; and if he had not had an overcoat, he would have had no policeman's knuckles in his collar, and no charge of felony to answer. We little know what a day may bring forth: if ever any man took due precaution that he might pass without mishap through any particular four-and-twenty hours, that man was Brown, on the 1st July 1857. He had been more than usually attentive to his private devotions that morning; all his best feelings had been awakened by the recent farewell he had taken of his kindest and dearest friends, and he descended from the vehicle, which stopped at the Royal Exchange, with a conscience void of offence towards everybody; and yet, before six hours had elapsed, he was destined to be dragged by the police along one of the principal streets of London, to the unbounded delight of a mob of vagabonds. From the Royal Exchange, the unconscious felon walked quietly along with his carpet-bag in his hand, and his overcoat upon his arm, to the Grand Cigar Divan in the Strand. Here he took the light refection of a cigar and a cup of coffee without any felonious intention, and also read the *Times* all through—firstly, for the patriotic

purpose of seeing how his country was going on, and what was the opinion of the oracle in Printing-house Square upon things in general; secondly, that he might inform himself whether there was anybody dead he knew, which, if it be an offence at all, certainly amounts to no more than a misdemeanour. Having satisfied himself upon these points, the doomed man requested permission to leave his carpet-bag until his return, as he intended to dine at 'Simpson's' in the evening. Leave was given, and an obliging offer was made to take charge of the unhappy overcoat; this Brown declined, 'not knowing:' he was afraid it might get soiled; so the evil spirit prompted him to sally forth, still holding that which was so soon to work him woe.

The demon who had chosen Brown for his shuttlecock that day, now drove him in the direction of St James's Street, to call upon a friend at the J. U. S. Club, which had then temporary accommodation next door to the 'Wellington.' Cheerfully he went to meet his fate, admiring as only a new arrival from the country properly can, the *funum et opes strepitumque Rome*, along the Strand, past the National Gallery, down Pall Mall, and up St James's Street. Had he found his friend at the club, he would have been saved; but Fortune had enticed the gallant gentleman away on purpose, and now she perfidiously whispered to Brown that he should pay a visit in the Regent's Park. As a horse, to whom a feed of corn is extended at a distance in the field, stands still, pricks up his ears, advances a few steps, kicks up his heels, and turns away, then trots up nearer, and gradually yields to capture for the sake of a sensual gratification; so Brown stood still and pondered, walked a few strides forward, turned sharply round, and took a few steps back, then turned again and quickened his pace, and ultimately crossed Piccadilly, for he snuffed the luncheon from afar, and for that consideration he determined to submit to confinement in a dismal house for the space of a couple of hours: alas! poor man, he never arrived there! Piously pondering upon the Thirty-nine Articles, for he had some idea of taking holy orders, he wended his way through the Burlington Arcade, and turning to the right, reached Regent Street by Vigo Street. Regent Street is (or rather was) poor Brown's delight; he used to declare he preferred it to the Boulevards; he maintained with warmth that the houses might not be so lofty, perhaps, as those in the Boulevards, and not so regular, but the very irregularity was itself a charm. Was not variety proverbially charming? and suppose it wasn't so long, was there any particular virtue in length? There were many things besides sermons which were better for not being too long, and streets, in his opinion, belonged to them. Upon this particular occasion, however, Brown was too full of luncheon—mentally, I mean, for otherwise he was quite the contrary—to pay much attention to his favourite street; he crossed hastily to the 'sunny' side, and had arrived nearly at the 'circus,' when a young lady fashionably attired, and very good-looking, but with rather more assurance than is considered becoming in any but ladies of very high rank or very low morals, tripped gaily up to him, and said: 'Why, Charles, what are you doing in town?' Now, Brown—whose name, you know, isn't Charles, but John—is a very polite man, if you give him time to collect himself, and would rather have his hair clipped quite close to his head à la convict, than be guilty of abruptness or rudeness to anything—however well-dressed—in the shape of woman: he was proceeding, therefore, to extricate himself by a civil speech from his extraordinary situation, and had just stammered out a few words, when he felt a tap upon his shoulder, administered from behind. He looked over his shoulder, and saw



a man, rather under the middle height, with a face bathed in perspiration, the evident consequence of accelerated motion upon a hot summer-day, who remarked curtly: "You were in my shop just now, sir." Brown—who could have made an affidavit before the most searching of juries that he had never seen the man before in his life, and who naturally supposed that a recent visitor at the shop had left something there by mistake, which 'the unknown,' like an honourable British tradesman, was anxious to restore—simply told him, civilly, that he was mistaken; and then turned away to finish his explanatory speech to the lady who had done him the honour of claiming his acquaintance; but, lo! the damsel had vanished, and 'the unknown,' darting in front of Brown to impede his progress, continued: "O yes, you were, and you've something belonging to me either in your pocket or under your coat—I know why you *carry an overcoat in July*."

Poor Brown's knees were loosened; it flashed across his mind that he had read in the papers how members of the swell-mob hid booty under overcoats, and transferred it to a 'gaily dressed female,' who made off with it securely, and he felt as if the fates had conspired to ruin him for life: his imagination conjured up the vision of a whole column of police reports, in which his own name stood prominently out in connection with the terms, 'Master of Arts,' 'impudent robbery,' 'gay female,' 'holy orders,' and everything incongruous. His first idea, as he afterwards confessed, was to hit 'the unknown' as hard as he could between the eyes, and then fly; but half a moment's reflection convinced him that this would be the worst thing he could do; a cry of "Stop, thief!" would be raised, and the suspicious circumstances against him would thus be materially increased. "I therefore," to use Brown's very words, 'am afraid I forgot all about the Thirty-nine Articles, and swore considerably; then took off my hat, and told "the unknown," in terms too strong for repetition, to take a good look at me, and make sure of his man, for as certainly as he was grossly mistaken, so certainly would I make him answer for his conduct. My vehemence appeared to stagger him a little, but he soon recovered himself, and with the air of determination suitable to a man who has lost his property, and at anyrate caught somebody, he expressed his intention of "going on with it." "Very well," said I, trying to look cool, "there's a police-station close by, and I'll walk there with you." On we went in silence for a yard or two, when he, seeing me so quiet, after a few furtive glances, such as a man casts at a dog of whose temper he isn't quite certain, when he wants to put his collar on, caught hold of my cuff. "Come, come," I said, "I am quite willing to go with you, but you really mustn't touch me. Will you leave go?" "No." I had a tight-fitting glove on, but I doubled my fist as well as I could, and with as much strength as my condition—for I confess I was "all of a tremble"—would allow, I made my right hand intimately acquainted with his nose. The force of the blow was sufficient, I am happy to say, to release me, though at the expense of a rent in my cuff, caused by his weight as he staggered back. Then a scene of confusion arose such as I never wish to be an actor in again at two o'clock p.m. of a July day in Regent Street. "The unknown," after anything but a scientific display of pugnacity, rushed at my throat with cries of "He's stolen my scarfs!" and made an ineffectual attempt to grasp me by the hair, but as that, like *écarté*, is a game for two, I took the liberty of taking a good clutch of his locks with one hand, and putting my other arm round his waist, was seized with an irresistible desire to break his back against the kerb-stone; but though I did my best, my nerves had been so shaken that he did not

quite go down; and just as I was proceeding to a second trial, the horny hand of a policeman was inserted in my cravat, and I was gruffly requested to "come along with him." I demanded the free use of my windpipe; this I obtained, and then begged for a cab, as there was a mob collected, yelling and howling in the most disagreeable manner. This Dogberry steadily refused, merely remarking that "he hadn't got no orders about a keb," and my reply that "it wasn't likely he could have, as there was nobody to give him any," was perfectly unavailing; so I was obliged to walk arm-in-arm—for he would persist in believing I wanted to escape—to the nearest police station.

Here I was put behind an iron machine of some kind, and carefully guarded, whilst "the unknown" enumerated my fabulous crimes. I had been, I found to my astonishment, into his shop, and purchased a scarf, and whilst he turned away to attend to something behind him, I had bolted with the article, retaking the money I had laid down for payment; and I had, moreover, purloined two other scarfs. All this story I of course indignantly declared to be an utter falsehood, but a police-sergeant is impassible. The sergeant in my case evinced no disposition to believe or disbelieve either one side or the other; he simply demanded my name and address, and my accuser's witness. The shop-boy, who was supposed to have beheld my villainous conduct, was summoned, and as soon as he made his appearance, he gave one look at me, and exclaimed to his master: "You've made a mistake, sir; I never saw this gentleman before in my life."

"Here's a pretty business," said the sergeant, tearing up the charge-sheet: "the charge is dismissed, of course."

"Not at all," said I. "I told this man he should answer for it, and I insist upon being taken to the nearest magistrate."

"A cab was sent for, and away we went to Marlborough Street. My reception there was anything but flattering; I was told to sit down upon a bench, and as I sat and ruminated, an official inquired: "Whose man is this, and what's the charge?" My captor answered: "Mine—felony!"

"It's an infamous lie!" I shouted. "A man has made a false charge against me, and I want the magistrate's advice."

"That's a very different story," said the official. "Come along with me, please."

"So we were ushered into the magistrate's presence, where I made a vehement harangue about my grievances, to which I must say the magistrate listened very patiently and courteously, and when I had done, said sternly: "Policeman, what is the charge?"

"Again my captor, who, in common with most constables, I believe, seemed, contrary to the principles of British law, to consider every prisoner guilty until he is proved not guilty, and even when he is, gave his former laconic reply: "Felony, your worship."

"I burst out afresh, but was checked by the magistrate, who asked "the unknown" if he meant to proceed with the charge.

"He shook his head, and muttered that he had made a mistake; and he looked so utterly miserable that I felt inclined to forgive him. Had his nose been visibly swollen—for though I am not a vindictive man, I must say I examined that feature attentively—I would; but it did not appear so to me, so I begged the magistrate to tell me how I could obtain redress.

"Oh, you can have your civil action, sir, if you like; you had better consult a solicitor.—And as for you, sir," he said, turning to the unknown, "you must take care what you do in this country. If you bring charges of felony against people with

no better reason for suspecting them than because they are like other people in build, are accosted by improper characters in the street, and carry overcoats upon their arms, you will some day find yourself in a very unpleasant predicament."

"I thanked the magistrate, demanded my persecutor's name and address, and commenced my triumphal exit from the court. How differently was I treated now! A particularly stolid policeman, laying his forefinger on his nose, and motioning me with a wink and a smile into a corner, whispered: "You go to Lewis—he'll get you a 'unded pound."

"Another official, who had contemptuously measured me from head to foot as I entered, now came up to congratulate me, and to enforce the policeman's advice, saying, as he did so, to a friend: "Here's a blessed tradesman been falsely charging a gentleman: he should go to Lewis, shouldn't he?"

"Coldly declining their officious advice, I dashed into the street. "Hurray!" cried the little boys who had followed me to the court—"Hurray! give us a copper, your honour." "I said it wa'n't you. I offered to bet a farden it wa'n't—didn't I, Bill?" "And I picked up yer 'at," said another. "That gen'lman steal anything!" roared a full-grown man; "why, he looks as if he'd be more likely to stand a quart."

"However, I was deaf to flattery; and calling a cab, drove away to the city, to a friend I had there who was an eminent solicitor. By his advice, I did not bring a civil action against "the unknown;" for with legal nonchalance, he pointed out how it was simply a case of mistaken identity, and that a civil action would look vindictive; so "the unknown" was allowed to compromise the matter by giving me a written apology, and paying a sum of money to the poor-box."

Thus was poor Brown the victim of his overcoat; and I really believe he cannot look upon a policeman or walk down Regent Street without a shudder, even unto this day.

### THE MONTH:

#### SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE recent poisoning cases, though no longer exciting public attention, are not forgotten among those by whom it is most to be desired they should be remembered—namely, men of science; for if it be true that the poisoner's skill has outrun the means of detection, so much the more need is there that chemistry should make a step in advance. This step, however, can only be made after a series of experiments of a highly refined character have been carried out; such as will enable the chemist in his laboratory to detect the subtlest cases. Results of this importance, involving a considerable amount of expense and labour, are beyond what we commonly expect from spontaneous individual research; and the subject is felt to be one which should be taken in hand by government. Let the proper authorities appoint a commission of two or three of our most competent chemists to work out a more perfect method of analysis than that at present in use, and pay them sufficiently, and there is good reason to believe that the result would be accomplished. Seeing that the public at large would be benefited by the result, there seems nothing unreasonable in looking to the public purse for payment; yet, taught by experience, no one is solicitous to bring the question forward, seeing how prone some feeble-minded members of parliament are to get up and oppose any scientific grant, especially one for the purpose of testing the effects of poison on animals, by the remark, at which the House is sure to laugh, that 'we don't want the public money wasted in poisoning dogs and cats.' It is only at times, and by a struggle, that the thousand

pounds set down in the estimates for the encouragement of science does actually get voted; and yet the appropriation of that sum has hitherto rendered singular service to the mechanical, astronomical, and physical and chemical sciences. The poison-question is, however, of that importance that we trust it will not be allowed to slumber; and we make these remarks in the hope that it will be kept awake. We recommend it as a proper one for discussion to *The Chemical News*, a periodical which is to be supported by chemists in all parts of the realm.

It seems probable that the question of steam-tillage will be settled before that of the economy and science of manures, for land has been ploughed, broken up, scarified, and otherwise treated by steam-power, with a notable saving of time and labour, while the work itself was better done than in the ordinary way. One proprietor was so well satisfied therewith, that he prepared twelve hundred acres by machinery. But as to the manure-question, authorities disagree; some, pointing to the Chinese, contend that the sewage of towns should be applied to the land, and not allowed to run to waste; others argue that the cost would be too great, and the result inadequate. One thing is certain, that Professors Frankland and Hofmann of London, who were appointed to inquire into the subject last summer, came to the conclusion, that town-sewage, owing to its deficiency of nitrogenous matter, would not pay for conversion into manure. The experiments made a few years ago at Manchester are worth remembering: arrangements were made for collecting the solid excreta only of sundry factories in boxes, which were removed once a week. These excreta were a free gift to the manufacturers; the cost of transport to the manure-works, one and a half mile, was half-a-crown a ton; yet the sum of real nitrogenous matter was found to be so small in proportion to bulk, that it was cheaper to buy sulphate of ammonia and superphosphate of lime at the market-price, and mix them with the fertilising materials, than to use the excreta which cost nothing but the cartage. Another fact is worth notice: in a report sent from Newfoundland to the Duke of Newcastle, it is stated that 350,000 hundred-weights of fish-offal can be had every year from that colony for conversion into artificial guano.

No traveller having come forward from love of geographical science to discover an overland route from Algeria to Senegal, the French government, desirous of establishing direct intercourse between these two of their African possessions, have now offered a prize to any explorer who will undertake and accomplish the task.—The latest news from Dr Baikie's Niger expedition informs us that all his steamers had safely passed up through the delta, and the doctor himself was at Rabbah, endeavouring to establish a trade with the natives.—Private letters from Consul Livingstone, read at the meeting of the Geographical Society by Sir Roderick Murchison, convey interesting particulars: the party had found the Zambesi navigable beyond their expectations, and had explored in all 2350 miles of river. Prospects of trade were very promising; of elephants' tusks alone, nearly 6000 had been sent down the river from June of 1858 to the same month of 1859. Cotton and sugar were also abundant. The party were the first white men ever seen at Shirwa. The sugar-trade alone, between Africa and Europe may, if continental rulers will only be wise in matters of political economy, grow to a prodigious extent. Fond as the French are of sugar, France consumes annually not more than 180,000 tons, while the United States, with fewer inhabitants by ten millions, consumes 431,000 tons.—From Australia, we hear that two newly organised parties have left Adelaide in hope of realising the often-attempted project of getting

directly across to the Gulf of Carpentaria on the north. Great expectations are entertained from these expeditions, owing to the recent discoveries of fertile grass-lands in the interior, where the whole region had been supposed to be a scorching, arid desert.—There is something to report, too, of a country nearer home: in 1884, the olive-trees in Greece numbered somewhat more than 1,000,000; now, they are nearly 8,000,000; and the 440 ships, of an aggregate of 52,000 tons, have multiplied into 4339, making 325,000 tons. Some of the Ionians are finding it better to cultivate currants than to play at politics; the export of currants from Greece last year, 1858, was 62,500,000 pounds, and we are told that this large quantity may easily be doubled when the trees have recovered from their epidemic, and the inhabitants take pains with their culture.

Astronomers are interested in the news that the aurora, or at least some of them, which have appeared so remarkably in our hemisphere during the past four months, were seen also in the southern hemisphere, where such phenomena are exceedingly rare.—A Russian astronomer, after careful study and examination of Mr De la Rue's photographs of the moon, confirms the notion first suggested by Hansen of the Seeberg Observatory, that our satellite is not a sphere, but egg-shaped, which fact—if it be a fact—makes it easier than heretofore to explain why we see always but one and the same lunar face, by reason of the position of the centre of gravity. The Russian savant's papers on the subject have been read before the Astronomical Society. Mr De la Rue having succeeded so well with his moon-photographs, took the sun's likeness a short time since from the Kew Observatory. It presents a striking contrast to the rugged visage of the moon, being smooth as a billiard ball, with a few minute specks, being the solar spots infinitely minimised.

Every month brings further demonstration of the economy effected by the use of super-heated steam—a subject to which, on account of its importance, we have frequently called attention. The Peninsular and Oriental Company have introduced the principle into three of their steamers, and will apply it to the rest of their fleet as fast as a vessel can be spared to lie idle for three weeks—the time required for the alteration. When accomplished, there will be a clear saving of many thousands a year in the article of coal. The outlay for coal may be inferred from the fact, that not long ago the Company had 283 coal-laden ships at sea at the same time, bearing cargoes to their several dépôts.—The advantage of steam over sail is shewn in an incident of the Newcastle trade: some years ago, a Northumbrian coal-owner employed eighteen sailing colliers, which carried to London 54,000 tons of coal a year; the same quantity is now conveyed by two steam-colliers of 800 tons each.—Improved locomotives are building at the Stephenson Works, Newcastle, for the Great Northern Railway, which are to burn coal, and consume the smoke. Meanwhile, the experiments instituted to achieve a smoke-consuming locomotive, are still industriously carried on in the northern counties, with promise of success.—The Armstrong crane is growing more and more into consideration as well as the Armstrong gun; hydraulic cranes are erected in the new docks lately opened at Swansea; and the advantages derivable are exemplified by the results at Woolwich. Ten hydraulic cranes were set up on the arsenal wharf during the Crimean war, at a total cost of £30,000. With these, vessels could be loaded direct, instead of by the former tedious and expensive two-fold process with lighters; and in consequence, the saving in demurrage per day while loading, in a short time covered the whole cost of the cranes.—The *Ariadne* steamer, now fitting out at Chatham,

will be the first vessel equipped with the Armstrong guns. Tremendous is the armament in preparation. She is to carry on her main-deck twenty-four guns, each 9 feet 4 inches long, and weighing 84 cwt.; and on the upper deck, two 68-pounders, 10 feet 2 inches long, weighing 95 cwt. each. With these, the *Ariadne* may steam through the Straits of Gibraltar, and send a ball at the same time to the two Pillars of Hercules.—Apropos of Chatham, some wise measures have been taken to provide amusing and instructive recreations for the troops, which, judging from present results, are likely to be very beneficial. Besides the reading-room, an evening drawing-class has been established for the Royal and Indian Engineers; the drawing is, of course, military, including fortification; but it will accustom the men to the use of the pencil, and lead probably to other improving results. A theatre has also been opened within the barrack-walls.—Sheffield, exercising its ingenuity, has recently manufactured steel kettle-drums, which have been approved and introduced into the army; and a firm in the same busy town have demonstrated that good bells can be made of steel. They have already cast 1300. Steel is cheaper than bell-metal, and stronger, whereby the weight of a bell may be materially diminished.

Mr Darwin's *Origin of Species* has now been some five weeks before the public, and is eagerly sought after by scientific men and thinkers generally. The book, in fact, is making a sensation; and the author must prepare to hear himself criticised—dogmatically by some; doubtfully, acceptingly, and perversely by others. Some scientific men are ready to accept his views in so far as they admit of several originals, though few, and dispute the single 'primordial form'; while others, who have long laboured at the philosophy of natural history, consider that the opinions of so thoughtful a naturalist as Mr Darwin, whose mind has been engaged on the subject for half a lifetime, may be received as safe conclusions. The bulk of the criticism and discussion is, however, yet to come; and we shall have something to report thereon in a future Month. Meanwhile, as shewing what Mr Darwin's conclusions are, and the points whereon most question will be raised, we quote a passage from his summing-up. 'I cannot doubt,' he says, 'that the theory of descent with modification embraces all the members of the same class. I believe that animals have descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number.'

'Analogy would lead me one step further, namely, to the belief that all animals and plants have descended from some one prototype. But analogy may be a deceitful guide. Nevertheless, all living things have much in common, in their chemical composition, their germinal vesicles, their cellular structure, and their laws of growth and reproduction. We see this even in so trifling a circumstance as that the same poison often similarly affects plants and animals; or that the poison secreted by the gall-fly produces monstrous growths on the wild-rose or oak-tree. Therefore, I should infer from analogy that probably all the organic beings that have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed.'

That terrible calamity, the wreck of the *Royal Charter*, will probably lead to discussion as to the stability of iron ships, and to the changes producible in the condition and structure of iron by the rolling in a gale, the shock of waves, and vibration of the screw. That some weakening effect is produced, is more than probable. In the late Dr Scoresby's *Journal of a Voyage to Australia, and Round the World, for Magnetical Research*, in that ill-fated vessel, there are incidental remarks bearing on this vitally important

question. Sundry failpres of the *non-work* are mentioned; but there is one passage which seems to indicate something more than a disagreeable effect from the motion of the screw, and may help to explain the quick parting of the vessel amidships: and quoting this, we conclude our series for the present eventful year. Thus the doctor writes: 'Sometimes this shaking, attended by a disagreeable noise, occurred under different circumstances—where, under incidental freshening of the breeze, the action of the sails overran the speed of the screw, and where in the violent lifting or heaving of the stern-frame the proper and ordinary revolutions of the screw were interfered with. The disadvantage was ascribed to the fact of the direct action of the engine with nothing of intermediate and yielding contacts to break the force of the incongruous contacts and operation of the water. The effect was often such as to cause the ship perceptibly to shake in the manner of an elastic flexure as, apparently to sensation, of some inches up and down, giving correspondent vibration in the spanker-boom, as supported at the two ends, amounting to a spring-like movement of the intermediate timber up and down.'

### TO OLD FRIENDS AND NEW.

THE average age of man has been tolerably well ascertained by the Insurance Offices. The average age of a literary periodical has yet to be discovered, and when found, will probably interest the Insurance Offices very little. What Hail and Fire Office could be got to insure it against Party Rancour? What Wind Protection Society against the veering blasts of Public Taste? What Association for the Suppression of Felony against those Thieves of Literature—the Plagiarists? The calculations would, at all events, be different from those connected with Human Life, since the younger the journal, the higher would be its Premium: the mortality among youthful periodicals being extreme, even to the extent, as has been known, in some unhappy cases, of dying before they are born.

It is very long ago indeed since *Chambers's Journal* emerged safely from the maladies peculiar to infant Literary Life. He cut his first tooth about Eight-and-twenty years ago, and has therefore attained an age, we believe, quite unequalled by any periodical of his class. Presenting, however, the best compliments of the season to both his Old and New Friends, and apologising to literary rivals who may have been expecting to hear 'something to their advantage,' he begs to intimate at the same time that he is not going to die yet by any means. It is possible that some alterations may take place in him during the ensuing century, if the public

taste of that far-distant future should reasonably demand them; but these will be rather in the direction of enlargement than of diminution, and far less of decrease. In the meantime, 'Chambers' has one confession to make: He has for some time past been surprised to find the type which served him in greener days, appear smaller and more difficult to read than it used to do. Many of his first subscribers—of whom a goodly number still remain attached—expressed the same difficulty; so he could no longer doubt that there was something in it. A fount of clear, readable type has therefore been procured, wherewith to celebrate his Nine-and-twentieth birthday. From that new Fount will flow, as we humbly hope, the same clear streams of healthful Literature as of old; bright, broad, and deep, as such should ever flow. It is believed that even a greater amount of spirit will be found to be mixed with them than heretofore. May the drinkers be as numerous as ever; equally welcome whether they come with crystal goblet or with earthen pitcher; for *Chambers's Journal* is meant for Rich and Poor!

### CHRISTMAS SONNET.

TO THE RICH.

HAST thou not aught to spare, now the rude wind  
Thrusts his cold fingers to the wanderer's heart?  
Shall it be then less cruel than thou art,  
Unto thy wretched brother's sufferings blind?  
Relieved by thee, the steward for God, thou'dst find  
A savour permeate thy sumptuous feast  
Which all the spices of the golden East  
Would fail to give. To keep in tune the mind—  
Without which banquets are a mockery—  
To make life's wilderness laugh out with flowers,  
And thee feel summer through the wintriest hours,  
There's nought so potent as sweet Charity.  
Keep, and you lose; give, and you gain. Mark this!  
Who yieldeth happiness, secureth bliss.

J. E.

On Saturday, the 7th of January 1860, will be commenced  
in this Journal,

A STORY, entitled

### THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

By JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF 'STORIES AND SKETCHES,' &c. &c.

To be continued every week until completed.

The present number of the Journal completes the Twelfth Volume; a title-page and index prepared for it may be had of the publishers and their agents.

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